

US EPA RECORDS CENTER REGION 5



1004929

Hazardous waste wells stir debate

Taylor, Romulus residents question safety of project.

By Mike Wowk
The Detroit News

ROMULUS — Residents will get another chance tonight — but probably not their last chance — to voice their opinions in a long-running battle to build deep underground wells to store hazardous liquid wastes.

A Birmingham company, Environmental Disposal Systems, Inc., is seeking a permit from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to build above-ground facilities next to a proposed 4,500-foot-deep well on Citrin Drive, near Interstate 94 and Inkster.

The well would be the state's first commercial disposal well for hazardous wastes. Environmental Disposal drilled a similar well in Romulus in 1993 — over bitter local opposition — but it's now tied up in the courts and has never operated.

While company officials and DEQ experts say the proposed wells would be environmentally safe, the project has run into strong local opposition for years.

"I can't think of any good reasons why anyone would want hazardous wastes coming into his community," Romulus Mayor William Oakley said.

City officials in neighboring Taylor — the Citrin Drive site is less than a mile from their border with Romulus — are also urging their residents to voice their opposition at tonight's hearing.

"There could be something wrong with the technology," said Fred Zorn, Taylor's economic development director. "No one is willing to give us a guarantee. Why take the risk so near a densely populated area?"

Michigan has nine existing deep wells for hazardous wastes, but all are operated by companies, such as Upjohn in Kalamazoo, for wastes that they produce themselves,

according to the DEQ.

The Environmental Disposal well would be the first in the state that would accept — for a fee — others' wastes and send them deep underground.

Experts say the groundwater extends only to about 200 feet down, so wastes in the nearly-mile-deep well would not pollute water supplies.

Steve Sliver of the DEQ's waste management division said it may be June 2000 before the permit application process for the well is completed. Tonight's hearing is only one more in a series of several public hearings.

"There will be at least one more hearing," Sliver said. "We believe in much public participation."

Deep well hearing

A public hearing on the permit for the well is 7 p.m. today at Romulus High School, 9650 S. Wayne Rd., Romulus

"I can't think of any good reasons why anyone would want hazardous wastes coming into his community,"

WILLIAM OAKLEY
Romulus mayor

DETROIT NEWS 7/15/99

Political leaders, residents attend EPA deepwell hearing

By AL POST
MCN Staff Writer

Romulus/Taylor political leaders and residents were among the 125 persons who turned out last Thursday night to protest against any possible awarding of federal Environmental Protection Agency permits for a hazardous deepwell project on Citrin drive in Romulus.

While the citizen count and the emotions were lower than in the past, the message was just as strong—reject the deepwell permits presented by Environmental Disposal Systems.

It was noted that some of the above number included EPA personnel.

Attorney Mark Jacobs, who has been handling the Romulus legal battle against EDS, set the tone of the meeting by stating "sometimes I question the purpose of meetings such as that being held tonight. The EPA should wait until the applicant obtains all the local permits needed, before calling such a meeting."

Because of the reverse actions, cities such as Romulus are forced to pay high fees (over \$700,000) to keep such unwanted wells out of their neighborhoods, Jacob said.

"In addition the long term battle against EDS has had an irreversible impact on many lives of city residents," the lawyer added.

Like others, Jacobs related his "frustration that anything we say tonight will have any impact on the future EPA decision."

Jacobs questions came following statements from state leaders such as Sen. Loren Bennett (R-Canton) and Rep. Ray Basham (D-Taylor) as well as Assistant Wayne County Executive Cameron Priebe.

Several Romulus council members spoke out against the well including Deborah Romak, Mary Collins and William

Wadsworth.

Romak decried the fact that Romulus has served as a waste dump site for the midwest and Canada for too many decades and several old toxic sites have been treated by Super Fund clean-up efforts in recent years.

She asked "How much do the residents of Romulus need to endure?"

Collins attacked the well applicant by saying "integrity is not one of EDS' code words." She also complained that if the well permit is granted the EPA will likely rely "too much on company records at the well site, rather than federal inspections."

Wadsworth said "it sickens me that a second well site is being considered, when the first well location hasn't finished its way through the court cycle yet!"

Private citizen Sandra Stepchuk reminded EPA officials that Michigan still is the largest source of fresh water in the nation and that "once toxic waste enters that water the damage is done and there is no turning back."

EDS officials continue to vow that the hazardous well project is totally safe for Michigan residents.

Romulus mayoralty candidate Leo Knasiak chided "incumbent Mayor William Oakley for not being here tonight."

Oakley, who had talked to Werbach on the phone earlier, submitted a written comment via a city council person. Oakley was appearing on his "Mayor's Chair" call-in TV show at the same time.

Written comments from area residents will be accepted by the EPA through Oct. 24. They should be sent to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Direct Implementation Section (Attention: David Werbach), 77 W. Jackson (WU-16J), Chicago, Ill. 60604.

**MOTOR
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WALT**

OC

**We Have
SALE
New - U
Manufacturer's f**

**New & Used Cla
50 Units M**



Boatman



Land

MORE THAN 100

Week of Oct 16th

Romulus
Roman

Pg 5

If Picasso could sew

From: ALLEN MELCER
To: R5AIR.R5ORA(DEBLASIO-DON)
Date: 10/16/97 10:20am
Subject: detroit coke news release -Reply

277

please send a copy of the release to Ann Mullen of the Detroit Metro-Times. Fax # (313) 961-6598 4060
phone # (313) 202-8015

She called this morning with some questions about Detroit Coke and I told her about the media day and she is interested in seeing it.

961-4060 geneane
961-3802 Fax newsroom

From: GREGORY RUDLOFF
To: CHO-HAK
Date: 10/15/97 8:02am
Subject: E-M:/ Detroit Coke --- Environmental Penalty Deadbeat -Forwarded

Here is the Detroit Coke article from the Detroit News:

City Council fights tax-delinquent polluter Detroit Coke Corp.

By Santiago Esparza / The Detroit News

City officials are investigating how a company has been allowed to operate although it owes Detroit \$1.2 million in back taxes and was cited numerous times for polluting. The City Council wants to close Detroit Coke Corp., a steel-related company, and have directed its staffers to research ways to shut down the West Jefferson Avenue plant.

"This company deserves nothing because that is what it has given the neighborhood," said Councilwoman Brenda Scott. "It's ridiculous."

Company officials have asked the Environmental Protection Agency for permission to operate two mile-deep waste water containment wells on Detroit Coke property.

The EPA can grant approval for the operation despite objections from the city. In 1992, the EPA cited the company for violating the Clean Air Act and forced it to install pollution control devices. EPA officials were unavailable for comment Monday because government offices were closed for Columbus Day.

But at a public hearing called by Scott, city activists demanded action from the council Monday. Company officials were not present and did not return calls seeking their comment.

"Too often, we see polluters come in because they think they can get away with it," said Tom Cervenak, executive director of Peoples Community Services, which operates a youth center near the company. "What does that tell our children?"

Council members were outraged that Detroit Coke remains in business despite its tax debt and numerous citations for pollution. City attorneys said the company has agreed to pay off its outstanding taxes within six years.

"Why is this company being given extensive cooperation instead of the city going in there and taking it for taxes?" Scott said. "It should be closed immediately."

Since 1991, Wayne County environmental officials have repeatedly cited Detroit Coke for violating state environmental laws. The company now owes the county \$253,000 in fines; county officials last week filed a lawsuit against the company and its president, J.D. Crane, to obtain the money.

Greg: Remember to call T & T with credit card info if you haven't already (649-0029 - arrangements made through Jane)

I don't have the meeting rooms set up yet. I finally talked with press secretary of Mayor Archer who said he would "try" to help us and call me later today.

CC: R5ORC.R5ORC1(cantello-nicole),

B.6
4/24/97
daily
Southtown
4/29

Its departure signaled the end to the worst of what has been called a once-in-500-years flood.

"Good riddance," said Susan Fagerholt of Hoople, N.D., summing up the sentiments of tens of thousands of people on the northern Plains who were driven from their homes during the Red's 250-mile flood course.

There was no jubilation, just relief, in this former fur-trading town, the oldest community in North Dakota. The people of Pembina fought off the Red by bolstering the dike encircling their community on the Canadian border, keeping it dry for its 200th birthday year.

"I wouldn't call it a victory. I wouldn't know what you would call it. We lost some and we won some. The town itself, I think we won," said Tim Wilwand, 38, a farmer and store owner who helped save the community that is the hub for 640 people. His farm was under water.

"This is something else," said James Moris, 66, a farmer whose family has been in the area since 1879.

Indeed, the town was an island in the middle of a lake, its water whipped into white caps by the wind. And there, overseeing things, was the Coast Guard, amid the greatest stretch of plains in America.

"It's really weird," said seaman Eddie Terrebonne. "It's something you don't expect to see in North Dakota."

The water was expected to take weeks to recede, but now the heaviest flow was on its way to its terminus at Lake Winnipeg..

The crest was expected to reach the city of Winnipeg this weekend.

After three weeks of devastation in North Dakota and Minnesota, the flood crest of the Red River surged into the Canadian province of Manitoba. Its departure signaled the end if the worst of what has been called a once-in-500-years flood. "Good riddance," said Susan Fagerholt of Hoople, N.D., summing up the sentiments of thousands of people who were driven from their homes during the river's 250-mile flood course. The crest was expected to reach Winnipeg, Manitoba, this weekend.

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Examples of Common Household Hazardous Products

- Pesticides and Herbicides
- Fertilizers
- Medications
- Gasoline
- Solvents
- Paints/Paint Thinners
- Pressure Vessels (like aerosol cans, propane tanks, etc.)
- Used Motor Oil, Automotive Products (Antifreeze, Cleaning Products, Batteries, etc.)
- Kitchen and Bathroom Cleaners
- Pest and Rodent Poisons and Repellants

See EPA's fact sheet for more information

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Post-It® Fax Note 7671

Date 4/17	# of Pages 2
To JEANNE GRIFFIN	From Gary Krueger
Co./Dept. EPA REG. DIV	Co. MPCA
Phone # 312-886-7600	Phone # 612-296-6139
Fax # 312-353-9176	Fax #

Krueger, Gary [GWSRS]

From: JEANNE GRIFFIN
To: gary.krueger
Subject: QUESTION
Date: Tuesday, April 15, 1997 3:50PM

** High Priority **

Ex. 5

25 more counties added to federal list of disaster areas

■ Tax deadline May 30 for those areas

LARRY MILLETT STAFF WRITER

Twenty-five additional counties in Minnesota, including Ramsey and Dakota, were declared disaster areas Tuesday by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

The declaration, however, did not include one county, St. Louis, that Gov. Arne Carlson had asked to add to the list.

All told, 46 counties — more than half of those in the state — are now eligible for disaster aid under a declaration signed earlier this month by President Clinton.

One surprising effect of the declaration, particularly for residents of counties such as Ramsey where flood damage has been fairly limited and localized, is an 11th-hour, six-week extension of the deadline for filing state and federal tax returns. The deadline would have been Tuesday, the traditional Tax Day, April 15.

"We've had a lot of people calling in tonight who are a little incredulous because they really haven't seen the flooding in their areas," said Jim Kittel, supervisor of telephone assistance for the state Revenue Department.

Under state legislation signed by Gov. Arne Carlson on Tuesday, individuals and businesses located in the counties designated federal disaster areas have until May 30 to pay their state taxes without penalties or interest. Federal taxpayers

also got an extension, although they must pay interest after April 15 on amounts unpaid. All filers are supposed to write FLOODS 97 stop their returns.

The new counties added to the disaster list are Aitkin, Anoka, Becker, Blue Earth, Carver, Dakota, Goodhue, Grant, Hennepin, Houston, Kandiyohi, Lake of the Woods, Le Sueur, Lincoln, Mahanomen, Morrison, Nicollet, Ramsey, Redwood, Renville, Scott, Sibley, Stevens, Wabasha and Winona.

Residents of these counties will now be eligible for government grants and loans to help cover disaster-related damages or expenses.

In requesting the expanded disaster declaration, Carlson said Tuesday morning that the state and federal government intend to "share the cost and pain" of this year's flooding with its victims.

Carlson noted that 6,000 Minnesotans have been evacuated from their homes as a result of flooding, predominately in the western part of the state.

Meanwhile, FEMA has already received more than 2,000 applications for aid from Minnesota residents.

The number to apply for aid through FEMA is 1-800-462-9029 (or 1-800-462-7585 for the hearing and speech impaired).

FOR HELP

The number to apply for aid through FEMA is (800) 462-9029 or (800) 462-7585 for the hearing and speech impaired.

Krueger, Gary [GWSRS]

From: Krueger, Gary [GWSRS]
To: JEANNE GRIFFIN
Subject: RE: QUESTION
Date: Thursday, April 17, 1997 8:29AM

Here are the 25 additional counties in Minnesota declared disaster areas by FEMA as a result of flooding.

Aitkin
Anoka
Becker
Blue Earth
Carver
Dakota
Goodhue
Grant
Hennepin
Houston
Kandiyohi
Lake of the Woods
Le Sueur
Lincoln
Mahnomon
Morrison
Nicollet
Ramsey
Redwood
Renville
Scott
Sibley
Stevens
Wabasha
Winona

Ex. 5

Ex. 5



UPPER MISSISSIPPI FLOODING

SUPERFUND SITES in IMPACTED COUNTIES

COUNTIES:

SITES:

Kittson
Polk
Norman
Clay
Wilkin
Traverse
Big Stone
La Qui Parle
Yellow Medicine
Red Lake
Roseau
Marshall
Pennington
Benton
(Ramsey)

None
Sylvester Byzewski Residence (Removal)
None
None
None
Reese Welding (CERCLIS - low priority)
Beardsley Municp Well (CERCLIS - high priority)
None
None
None
None
None
None
None
Pigs Eye (CERCLIS - high priority)
New Brighton/Arden Hills (NPL)
MacGillis & Gibbs (NPL)
Koppers (NPL)

Brown
Chippewa
Shelburne
Stearns

New Ulm Gas Mfg Site (CERCLIS - low)
None
Pinedale Farms, Inc. (CERCLIS - low)
Coid Spring Granite (CERCLIS - low)
Waite Park Wells (NPL)
St August San LF (NPL - deleted)

Swift
Washington

None
Washington Co. LF (NPL - deleted)
Baytown (NPL)
Oakdale Dump (NPL)
Bellaire Sanitation (CERCLIS - low)
Stillwater Gas Mfg Site (CERCLIS - low)
Buffalo City Dump (CERCLIS - low)

Wright

Minnesota Public Water System Impacted by Flooding
[Information Provided by the Minnesota Department of Health]

SYSTEM	DATE	ACTION
Breckenridge	4/11/97	The wells are ok. The last crest came withing 5 in. of going over the flood wall around the treatment plant. Another creast as high or higher is still expected due to ice jams upstream. The operator has increased the chlorine level
	4/14/97	The water is repeaking
	4/15/97	Parts of city being evacuated again
	4/16/97	River may peak higher than dikes
Browns Valley	4/11/97	The wells are ok so far. The operator will notify field staff if situation changes.
Georgetown	4/11/97	The wells are ok.
	4/14/97	Water in the streets. Detail discussion with the operator indicated that the city was shutting off the water supply for all but three hours a day because the sewer system was flooded and they didn't want any more water in the sewer. Mr. Pederson informed the operator that by letting the system pressure go to zero, he was allowing contaminated water in the system BOIL ORDER ISSUED.
Kent	4/11/97	The wells are ok.
Ortonville	4/11/97	If the lake rises 2-3 ft more, the wells could go under. But everything is ok so far. The operator has increased the chlorine level.
Perley	4/11/97	The wells were down due to a power outage. However, the National Guard brought in a gnerator to run the wells and their lift stations. The water supply has been turned on for a couple of days.
	4/14/97	Steve Pederson has not been able to contact anyone in the city.
Ada	4/11/97	Town has been evacuated with all utilities shut down. Steve Pederson has not been able to contact anyone in town, so a letter has been sent to ISSUE A BOIL ORDER.
	4/12/97	Steve Pederson was able to contact the operator for the city. The system was only down for 2 hours. Generators wers used to keep the system going. Chlorine level was raised. BOIL ORDER RECINDED. Steve Pederson will sample on Monday 4/14/97.
	4/15/97	Water samples were ok
	4/16/97	Water is on the rise again

SYSTEM	DATE	ACTION
Shelly	4/11/97	Town has been evacuated with all utilities shut down. Steve Pederson has not been able to contact anyone in town, so a letter has been sent to ISSUE A BOIL ORDER.
	4/12/97	Water system is back on. Steve Pederson informed that city that they were on a boil order until water samples were ok. Samples collected.
	4/14/97	Samples ok. BOIL ORDER RECINDED.
Hendrum	4/14/97	Water in streets. Water system ok.
Halstad	4/14/97	Can't get to city. No information.
	4/15/97	Flooding is occurring, but water system is ok
Odessa	4/14/97	City has been evacuated. Water was turned on at 2:00pm. BOIL ORDER ISSUED. Steve Pederson sampled water.
	4/15/97	Water system sampled today
	4/16/97	Water sample positive. System remains on boil order. Resample scheduled for 4/21/97.
Moorhead	4/14/97	Water system ok
Brentwood Acres	4/14/97	Water system ok
	4/15/97	River still on the rise, but everything is ok
North Kittson RWS	4/11/97	National Guard generator supplying power to well field. Line power to plant. North tower in Lancaster is frozen but everyone has water.
	4/15/97	Line power restored to well field. Kennedy and Lancaster towers are back on line.
Marshall-Kittson RWS	4/11/97	Local farmer's generator supplying power to wells and plant.
Marshall-Polk RWS	4/11/97	Crookston area plant without power, but water is being backfeed to customers from system. Warren plant and wells are on line power. Over land flooding at sandbagged reservoir outlet, but reservoir outlet valve is closed.
Warren	4/11/97	System is ok
Fisher	4/11/97	Power has been restored, but chlorine not started until 4/11/97 due to damage. Voluntary BOIL ORDER ISSUED.
	4/14/97	Samples ok. BOIL ORDER RECINDED.
Argyle	4/11/97	Line power to plant. City generator supplying power to well. Elevated tank frozen.

SYSTEM	DATE	ACTION
	4/14/97	System up and running.
Nielsville	4/11/97	Power out. Two generators to arrive 4/10/97 for water and wastewater operation. Timeline for restoration of line power unknown.
	4/14/97	Power restored. NO flooding occurred.
Beltrami	4/14/97	Water system diked. Seems to be holding
Climax	4/14/97	Sandhill River may flood road.
Montevideo	4/16/97 (update)	Reservoir has been offline since flood started. BOIL ORDER ISSUED previously. System has been flushed. Water samples taken on 4/15/97.
Granite Falls	4/16/97 (update)	System remains on BOIL ORDER . System flushed 4/16/97. Water sample will be collected 4/17/97.

A few years later, it's another 100-year flood

Farms' drainage ditches, tiling add to the problem

The '97 Floods

By Dean Rebuffoni
Staff Writer
Star-Tribune

The Great Flood of '97 leveled scores of buildings along the Red River, forced hundreds of people to flee their homes and farms, washed out roads and bridges, and caused the death of Clarence Lyon, who drowned after his boat capsized in the flood waters in Fargo, N.D.

That was the Great Flood of 1897 - the largest, if not the most devastating, flood on the Red in recorded history. On April 7 of that year, the river crested at a record 40.1 feet in Fargo. The record still stands.

A century later, another major flood is surging down the Red, whose propensity for such spring disasters has become painfully predictable. The same is true of the Minnesota River, giving both waterways the same dubious appellation: flood-prone.

But why? And why does the frequency of flooding appear to be increasing on the two rivers? How badly has humankind exacerbated the problem?

Many residents who have been hammered by flooding this spring aren't aiming their wrath solely at nature. They're furious about the amount of drain tile that has been laid to turn wetlands into farmland and are firmly convinced that the

flooding never would have become so extensive if drainage ditches weren't pouring so much water into the Red, the Minnesota and their tributary streams.

They say the man-made drainage system is the main reason that they're experiencing so-called 100-year floods every few years. And some say the entire system will have to be reexamined once the water recedes.

"When this is all over, there are some real issues about this tiling everywhere that we're going to have to sit down and deal with," said Granite Falls Mayor Dave Smiglewski, as the Minnesota River crested in his city last Sunday.

Serious flooding is nothing new on either river. There is abundant evidence that major floods occurred on both rivers in pioneer days and beyond. Consider, for example, this account of a 1854 trek along the Minnesota River by settler Martha Thorne:

We were six weeks on that terrible trip with our ox teams. There had been so much rain that all dry land was a swamp, all swamps, lakes, and the lakes and rivers all over everywhere. Sometimes we worked a whole day to get one-hundred feet through one of the sloughs. . . . We would seem to

be in a sea.

Back then, there were extensive wetlands - swamps, marshes, prairie potholes - throughout the watersheds of the Red and the Minnesota. Much of what Thorne saw apparently were wetlands that had been filled by a very wet spring.

However, most of those wetlands have since been drained, and today the two watersheds are crossed by thousands of miles of drainage ditches and tens of thousands of miles of buried drain tiles.

The artificial drainage system was built to advance agriculture; underground pipes, or tiles, force quicker water drainage, leaving a deeper layer of soil for farming. But draining the wetlands has eliminated their natural ability to absorb rain and melting snow and to gradually release that precipitation into the rivers.

"Ditch and tiling systems are very efficient in moving water faster downhill, and they help ensure good, reliable food production," said Jim Sehl, a hydrologist and drainage expert with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

"The flip side is, 'Look out below: here comes the water.' "

Sehl's point is that tiling accelerates the natural movement of water from farm fields and into ditches. Because they have straight, gener-

ally uniform and unobstructed channels, ditches convey water more rapidly than natural watercourses such as creeks, which have meandering channels and such obstructions as dead trees.

Eventually, the water surges into the Red and the Minnesota.

"Tiling and drainage ditches have dramatically altered flow regimes in the basins of the Red and the Minnesota," said Scott Faber. "But that's not a situation unique to those rivers.

"Every major river basin in the United States has experienced such dramatic changes with increased flood flows. Hydrographs show that rivers have higher periods of high flows and lower periods of low flows."

Faber is director of floodplain programs for American Rivers, a national environmental group involved in conservation projects along the Minnesota and other streams in this state.

Despite criticism, tiling and ditching systems clearly have produced benefits. They allow fields to be plowed and seeded earlier in the spring, and agriculture is now the economic mainstay in the watersheds of the Minnesota and the Red.

"The success of . . . drainage ditches in encouraging and stabiliz-

ing settlement has been the primary factor in the development of the Red River Basin into a recognized major agricultural production area," according to a recent report by Don Ogaard and Jim McLaughlin.

"These on-farm drainage systems have done more to increase and stabilize agricultural production in the basin than any other available production-influencing technique."

Ogaard is executive director of the Red River Watershed Management Board, a local agency in northwestern Minnesota; McLaughlin heads a committee that advises the board.

They stressed that starting in the late 1940s and continuing into the 1970s, the federal government placed a major emphasis on increasing farm production, and that included incentives to install drainage tiles.

Farm drainage systems aren't the only works of humankind that exacerbate flooding. Although the Minnesota's watershed is lightly urbanized, and the Red's watershed even less so, both contain scores of cities, each with streets, sidewalks, parking lots, rooftops and other impervious surfaces.

These surfaces force rainwater to rush more quickly into the rivers

than would be the case if the water fell on grassy surfaces. Also, studies have shown that building impervious surfaces over about 10 percent of the land in a watershed causes serious problems for water quality and aquatic life in streams and lakes.

Still, despite all of the effects of humankind on flooding, two natural factors - geology and the weather - are crucial factors in the flood picture.

Take geology: Donald Schwert, a professor of geosciences at North Dakota State University, explained that the Red cuts through one of the

flattest expanses of land anywhere: the former bed of ancient Glacial Lake Agassiz.

Because it's a relatively young stream, the Red hasn't yet carved a significant valley, Schwert said. Rather, the river's channel is shallow and narrow, and can't contain a strong influx of melting snow or long, heavy rains. The channel overflows, spreading water across the old lake plain. During the flood of 1897, the Red at some points was 12 miles wide, although not very deep.

Weather also has greatly influenced this year's flooding. A wet

autumn, unusually heavy winter snows, a rapid spring snow-melt - all have contributed mightily to the problem. Indeed, some contend that, even if the two watersheds had extensive wetlands, there still would be major flooding.

For example, the great flood of 1897 on the Red occurred before its watershed was extensively ditched and tiled, and when it still had virtually all of its original wetlands.

Also, part of the "sea" of water that Martha Thorne saw along the Minnesota in 1854 apparently was

the result of wetland overflow: those wetland basins were unable to absorb all of the abundant rainfall, and they spilled water across the native prairie. Wetlands can absorb a lot of water, but there's a limit.

"It's easy to show that wetland drainage contributes to the overall flow of a flood," said Jim Richardson, a professor of soil science at North Dakota State University and a wetland expert. "We've shown that there have been significant increases in flow rates starting in World War II, and that the rates has

been progressive ... more drainage of wetlands.

"But nobody has demonstrated what wetland drainage contributes to the peak flow during a major flood. And it's the peak flow, that 'last inch of water,' that causes the most flood damage."

Staff Writer Bob Von Sternberg contributed to this report.

The Martha Thorne quotation is from "Old Rail Fence Corners: Frontier Tales Told by Minnesota Pioneers," Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1976.

(Copyright 4/13/97)

THURSDAY, JUNE 6, 1996

SAINT PAUL PIONEER PRESS

W 3

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WISCONSIN BRIEFING



Thompson given names of three judicial finalists

MILWAUKEE

Gov. Tommy Thompson has been given the names of the three finalists for the vacancy that will be left in August when Circuit Judge Patricia S. Carey takes a seat on the state Court of Appeals.

The three are M. Joseph Donald, Clare L. Fiorenza and Richard J. Sankovitz.

Gov. Tommy Thompson was given the names Tuesday by William T. Curran, a Mauston lawyer who heads the governor's selection committee. Thompson usually waits a few weeks to make a final selection to give people a chance to offer opinions about the finalists.

Donald is an assistant city attorney in Milwaukee.

Fiorenza was a member of the governor's selection committee the past five years before resigning earlier this year so she could seek a judgeship.

Sankovitz was a finalist in 1993 for a judicial vacancy. He is a lawyer with the firm Whyte Hirschboeck Dudek and practices mainly business law and commercial litigation.

'A improvements OK'd

TOMAH

Congressional legislation containing \$22 million worth of improvements at Veterans Affairs hospitals contains construction at the agency's institution in

Railroad agrees to inspection before shipping chemical across reservation

ASSOCIATED PRESS

ASHLAND, WIS.

Wisconsin Central Ltd. railroad agreed Wednesday to inspect a bridge on the Bad River Indian Reservation before hauling tankers of sulfuric acid to a copper mine in Michigan.

The Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa asked the railroad to delay the shipment because of questions about the safety of the bridge, which may have weakened during April flooding, Chairman John Wilmer said.

Wisconsin Central will inspect the bridge and its track Monday, said Bob Jones, vice president of claims.

The track and bridge are routinely inspected and no problems have been found, Jones said from Wisconsin Central headquarters in Rosemont, Ill.

Wisconsin Central's accident rate has been under close scrutiny in recent weeks.

On March 4, 35 cars of a Wisconsin Central freight train jumped the tracks on the northern end of Weyauwega in a

fiery derailment. Fourteen were tankers loaded with propane, creating the threat of an explosion that kept 2,300 area residents evacuated from their homes for 18 days.

Sulfuric acid is a corrosive chemical that is poisonous if swallowed or inhaled. It burns skin on contact and can pollute the environment if spilled, Ashland Fire Chief Keith Tveit said.

The acid, which was loaded on tankers in Arizona, is destined for White Pines, Mich., where it will be used to leech copper from underground mine shafts, Jones said.

Wisconsin Central's branch line across the Bad River Reservation is rated for traffic at slow speeds and now has at least three freight trains going over it every week, Jones said.

The tankers of sulfuric acid weigh no more than some of the shipments now being hauled on the line, he said.

Sulfuric acid is a fairly routine category of hazardous material being hauled by railroads, with shipments moving all over Wisconsin, Jones said.

"There are literally thousands of cars moving through the country," he said.

State Rep. Barbara Linton, D-Highbridge, said Wisconsin Central is expected to ship at least 80 cars of the acid to the mine throughout the summer.

Linton, who notified an Ashland newspaper about the railroad's planned shipments of the acid, said she was upset they could be made without notifying local governments.

"I don't think there was a soul in Ashland County who knew this was going to happen," she said.

Jones said railroads were not obligated to notify local governments about hazardous chemicals being hauled under state and federal regulations.

Monday's bridge inspection would not disrupt plans for moving the first shipment of tankers to the mine, Jones said. The railroad has yet to pick up the tankers from another railroad that is hauling them to Chicago.

Trains will haul no more than four tankers of sulfuric acid to the Michigan mine in each shipment, Jones said.

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9/17/96
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Army urged to toughen landfill cleanup plan

Sierra Club targets pollutant leaks at Ft. Sheridan

By SUSAN DODGE

An environmental group is recommending that the U.S. Army immediately begin collecting dirty liquid flowing into Lake Michigan

from two landfills at Fort Sheridan to prevent pollution of the area's drinking water.

The Army has proposed a \$16.9 million cleanup for the landfills, including a cap to contain pollutants.

The landfills leak water with a high iron content into Lake Michigan. They also emit gases, including benzene, vinyl chloride and methane, which could pose a hazard to more than 100 service personnel living about 50 feet from them, said Colleen Reilly, environmental coordinator for base realignment and closure.

Reilly said the Army had tested the leaking liquid and found that it exceeded the state Environmental Protection Agency's standards for iron

content, but was not hazardous for drinking water.

Cracks in storm sewers beneath the landfills are allowing the material to flow into the lake.

The Army's proposed cleanup must be approved by the state and federal environmental protection agencies.

A hydrogeologist working for the Sierra Club's Illinois chapter said the Army had failed to test for dangerous contaminants in the landfills before releasing its cleanup proposal.

The club said it strongly recommended collecting the liquid that now flows into Lake Michigan to prevent further pollution.

The public comment period on the Army's plan recently ended, and the Army and EPA plan to review the comments before possibly revising the cleanup proposal, Reilly said.

"The Army does predict that several materials

that may be harmful to human health may exist in landfills 6 and 7, but tests for these dangerous contaminants have not been done," Charles H. Norris, the Denver-based hydrogeologist, wrote in his report on the Army's plan.

"The proposal indicates that many types of hazardous contaminants are likely to occur, including potentially carcinogenic and radioactive materials."

If the waste in the landfills proves to be hazardous, a cap would not be adequate to protect human health and the environment, he said. The pollutants would continue to be carried into Lake Michigan.

Fort Sheridan was closed in 1993, but the Army and Navy still use about 300 acres of the 695-acre site. A 551-home redevelopment project is slated for 115 acres about 3,000 feet north of the landfills
(Copyright Chicago Sun-Times 9/17/96)

Report a river of no return:

IJC says it won't back down from criticism of lagging Detroit River cleanup

Doug Schmidt

Star Environment Reporter

International Joint Commission (IJC) staffers in Windsor say their stinging indictment of the lagging Detroit River cleanup effort won't be watered down.

"Definitely. The tone of it, as our commissioners said, won't be toned down," said Jennifer Day, a spokeswoman for the IJC's Great Lakes office in Windsor.

"Based on what I've seen so far, don't believe so," added Bruce Kirschner, the bi-national organization's Remedial Action Plan co-ordinator.

The final report, complete with recommendations on what needs to be done, is expected in September. One likely recommendation will be to start getting industry and the private sector involved in what is expected to be a very expensive cleanup effort. Getting rid of the

toxic chemical-laden riverbed sediment -- the industrial legacy of decades of environmental neglect -- could cost "millions to billions," according to Kirschner.

"Obviously, if we're going to get anywhere we'll need the big bucks of big business," said Rick Coronado of the Citizens Environmental Alliance

Kirschner was the chief author of a draft report made public this spring slamming governments and agencies on both sides of the border for their woeful record in trying to clean up one of the Great Lakes' most polluted sites.

The Detroit River, whose watershed is home to four million people, was designated more than 10 years ago as one of 43 areas of concern within the Great Lakes basin.

In its first site assessment to try and find out why cleanups are

proceeding at a snail's pace, the IJC draft points to a "leadership vacuum" and a lack of resources dedicated to the problem. The draft, a copy of which was obtained by The Windsor Star, cites cutbacks in government monitoring and research, as well as failure to come up with a plan for dealing with the chemical toxic soup in the riverbed's sediment.

Immediately after the draft became public, representatives of the state and provincial agencies condemned in the report confidently predicted the final version would be significantly toned down.

Not likely, according to the local IJC office. What was originally intended as a mere white paper for internal government consumption is being turned into a public document.

The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality is the lead

agency for the Detroit River remedial action plan (RAP), but the Canadian side has also been on the receiving end of criticism. The public outcry over the draft report's contents -- particularly in light of regular beach closings and fish consumption advisories -- has led to the Windsor area's three government MPs scrambling for answers.

Essex MP Susan Whelan said there are plans to bring federal Environment Minister Christine Stewart to Windsor to meet with "key people" involved in the Detroit River RAP.

Local environmentalists are among those urging both federal governments to take over responsibility for the cleanup. They argue the job is too big for provincial and state authorities.

(Copyright 8/30/97 The Windsor Star)

In Delray: Residents say no to wastewater wells

Opposition heavy against plan to store hazardous waste.

Rhonda Bates-Rudd

The Detroit News

Southwest Detroiters hurled a barrage of questions, cat calls and even expletives to Environmental Protection Agency representatives at an information meeting last week to discuss plans for a wastewater containment plant in the Delray community.

Officials at Detroit Coke Corp. in 1996 submitted an application to the EPA requesting permission to reopen

underground wells that would contain hazardous ammonia liquor waste.

The very idea that the EPA would consider reviewing Detroit Coke's application angered the more than 50 residents in attendance. Among those voices was Francisco Solano, a Delray native.

"Our area is already one of the top 10 polluted geographical areas in the United States," said Solano, 38.

"I can't believe the EPA would even consider allowing J.D. Crane to reopen

Detroit Coke and further contaminate the community he began polluting eight years ago. Where is the humanity in all this?"

Under company President J.D. Crane, the ammonia waste-producer closed in 1990 for failure to pay the city of Detroit and Wayne County more than \$1 million in back taxes and fines. It had been cited by the EPA for numerous environmental violations. Crane has agreed to pay off the taxes in

six years.

Also in attendance Detroit City Councilwoman Kay Everett and City Councilman Ken Cockrel Jr., who handed the EPA panel a resolution passed last week by council opposing the plan.

"Southwest Detroit deserves to be treated better than this," Everett said.

"The reality of this whole situation is that if the ground water or the air is contaminated here, then it will

ultimately have an impact on the air quality and the drinking water in Detroit and surrounding communities.

"When we speak about a resurgence in Detroit, we want Southwest Detroit to be a part of that... we should be looking at ways to try and build the city up, not bring it down. And the reopening of that facility will be just like pouring salt into the wound of this community."

(Copyright 1/14/98)

From: ALLEN MELCER
To: R5WCB1.WESTLAKE-KENNETH, R5AIR.R5ORA.CANAVAN-MARY,...
Date: 12/22/97 9:41am
Subject: Detroit Coke Meeting notice

Attached is the notice for the elected officials meeting for the Detroit Coke UIC applications. Please forward this notice, along with the public meeting notice, to any city, county, state or federal elected officials that you think may be interested in the project. let me know if you have any questions.

(Ken - I only have the public meeting notice in hard copy. let me know where you are located, and I will deliver a copy to you.)

Allen Melcer
6-1498

Elec Copy of Public Meeting Notice?

3d Draft

April 17, 1997

RICT 5 Emergency Flooding Meeting

Attendees: Tom Geishecker (ERB), Mary Morgan (WD), Sahba Rouhani (WD), Arturo Cisneros (UST/RCRA), George Schupp (QA-RMD), Don DeBlasio (OPA), Bob Springer (RHD), Glenn Cekus (OCEPP), Ed Fairbanks (Tribal Liason-MN), Felipe Gomez (ORC), Jon Schweiger (WN), Milo Anderson (WD).

Minutes:

Introduction

Copies of various informational documents were distributed to attendees.

Glenn C. opened the meeting by noting 47 counties were now declared federal disaster areas and EPA was preparing to respond to an ESF #10 activation if and when that occurs in the near future (possibly after floodwaters recede). Only 1 facility (fertilizer plant) had been flooded (dike breach) to as of this meeting. MPCA will perform analysis after waters recede. Sorbents are being stockpiled to deal with fuel oil tanks which are being uprooted in basements and backyards. MPCA is distributing flyers on how to deal with the tanks, raw sewage, household HW, and solid wastes. An update on anticipated ESF #10 status will be available after an upcoming FEMA call.

Divisional Reports

ERB/HAZMAT

Tom G. Reported that post-flood response activities will probably include assisting MPCA in locating and retrieving orphan drums (similar to Ohio River). Response authorities available to EPA for response at any time include CERCLA and OPA 90.

George S. noted that FEMA has set aside \$3,000,000 for EPA response activities. Guidance on how to get the \$ are still being developed (refer to recent Draft Financial Management Plan SOP to the Regional ESF-10 Supplement). At this time, it looks

like the only funds available to local responders are from SARA Sec 123. Rick Karl should be contacted on Hazmat issues.

TRIBAL LANDS/PRAIRIE ISLAND NUCLEAR PLANT/FEMA

Bob Springer and Ed Fairbanks discussed the "hot" issue of FEMA assistance (and perceived lack of) to the Tribal Governments in MN. FEMA/John McKay (FEMA Federal Coordinating Officer/MN) apparently consider the Lands to be subordinate to the State government rather than being an independent government unit. As such, FEMA/McKay feel that the Tribes should seek FEMA assistance through the State, asserting that would take at least 1-2 years even if FEMA could lend aid directly. FEMA/McKay claim the Tribes need to form a unit like the County HAZMAT groups in order for FEMA to deal directly.

The Tribes, which met with Mr. Adamkus on 4/3/97, feel that FEMA should offer direct aid to them as independent governments without delays attendant to going through the State or forming a special unit. No request has been made to the State, pending the Upper Sioux Tribe's meeting with McKay/FEMA today to attempt to resolve the matter.

In the meeting, ostensibly about finances for the POTW to be built on a nearby bluff, Mr. Adamkus promised the Tribe that EPA stood ready to assist them to the extent possible, and that EPA would grant funds for hooking up residents to the POTW once constructed. It was noted that while EPA is a Tribal advocate, EPA's authorities are not as broad as FEMA's in these situations, and that this was part of a larger national problem involving FEMA policy and the Stafford Act.

A call from the Tribes is expected today after the FEMA meeting, and the Tribes are also expected to go up the political chain with the issue. Ed F. noted that there is a MN Tribal Superfund Team which might be a resource for information regarding flood impacts on Tribal Lands. He also showed photos of extensive flooding and sandbagging and the Upper Sioux and Prairie Island Reservations

SUPERFUND

Tom G. noted that at this time there were 22 counties for which EPA had information on the existence of CERCLA sites, and information on the additional counties is being compiled. Tom

requested that we refrain from making contacts with the state/sites at this time since ESF #10 activation has not occurred. Any use of EPA authorities in the flood areas must be coordinated with ERB/Karl and FEMA in advance.

RCRA

Art C. stated there are 4,000 RCRA facilities (including SQG's) in the first 25 counties alone. Data is being sought on the remaining counties. MPCA will make determination as to needs for impacted facilities, which hopefully will be much less numerous than the total universe of facilities in the 47 counties.

Air

Jeff Bratko sent a memo wherein he stated the main issue right now is open burning. The DNR told Jeff that permits will be issued only for burning of vegetative materials, and that DNR would consult with MPCA prior to issuing any other permits. ARD has limited jurisdiction over the Prairie Island Nuclear plant, issues can be directed to Eric Glatstein. The plant is in a ready-mode for possible shutdown. MPCA and MDPH are working to produce a fact sheet on asbestos concerns.

Big Stone Lake Dam Failure

Milo A talked about the possible failure of the Big Stone Lake Dam. Currently the gates are wide open to alleviate pressure, and debris previously clogging the gates has been removed. Concern still exists regarding the fact that reservoirs are filling rapidly. Ray Rivera is the MN Superfund Team Activation Point. The Red River is still rising, albeit more slowly.

WATER

Mary M. and Sahba R. provided lists of impacted POTW/WWTP. WWTP are not reporting bypasses at this time due to the emergency, more information is expected next week as reports trickle in. ESF#3 has the lead in Iowa with ESF #10 standing by in support mode. Aerial flyovers are being done to take photos of NPDES facilities along certain segments of the rivers and additional information is forthcoming. ACE is the lead for ESF-3 (Public Works and Engineering) which addresses damage at these facilities (EPA is a support Agency for ESF-3).

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Don D. requested that any press inquiries be coordinated with his office. Site specific issues can be transferred directly to site managers, and generic issues should be forwarded to the RICT rep for the particular division. Be sensitive to avoiding interagency sniping or negative comments.

NEXT MEETING

Tues 4/22/97.

Ex. 5

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From: ALLEN MELCER
To: R5AIR.R5ORA(DEBLASIO-DON, kimbrough-derrick), R5WS...
Date: 10/10/97 12:28pm
Subject: travel arrangements -Reply

Don and everyone else:

As you may know, we have decided to postpone the elected official and public meetings until sometime in November. Greg, Don and I will still be going to Detroit for the river sediment sampling and media day. The following is the new schedule.

Tues: 10/21 Leave Chicago around 9:00 a.m.

10/21 p.m. conduct inspection of the detroit coke facility

10/22 all day spent on boat doing video survey of river bottom

10/23 a.m. media day show the boat and detroit coke site to the media

10/23 p.m. continue river survey

10/24 continue river survey until approx. 1 p.m. then head to the airport to come home

Don, old buddy, could you make the necessary changes to the hotel, rental car and airline reservations? We will keep the same flight coming back on friday.

Thanks,
Allen

> > > DON DEBLASIO 10/08/97 09:33am > > >
these are the travel arrangements i have made for our entourage:

Greg/Allen/me -Depart O'Hare: 7:35 A Oct 20 Northwest Airlines Flt 368, arrive Detroit 9:50

Gordon Blum - Depart O'Hare: 6 A Oct 21, Northwest Flt 522, arrive Detroit 8:10

Blum - depart Detroit 9:35 A Oct 22, Northwest Flt 1451, arrive O'Hare 9:48

me - Depart Detroit 6:30 P Oct 23

Allen/Greg - Depart Detroit 3:05 P Oct 24, Northwest Flt 437, arrive O'Hare 3:20.

Air fare: \$70 round trip

Allen: car rental - \$32 a day

Greg: Remember to call T & T with credit card info if you haven't already (649-0029 - arrangements made through Jane)

I don't have the meeting rooms set up yet. I finally talked with press secretary of Mayor Archer who said he would "try" to help us and call me later today.

CC: R5ORC.R5ORC1(cantello-nicole),